

News Advisory



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Mike Lynch, Auburn Sector
Superintendent
(916) 863-8851



Saturday - K-9 Demonstrations State Park Ranger K-9 Program Reunion 40th Anniversary



WHO/WHAT: More than 50 California State Park rangers and guests from across the state will reunite in Folsom on Saturday to mark the K-9 Program's 40-year history.

WHEN/WHERE:

Friday 7 p.m. –

First State Park K-9 Handler Dick Edwards, will give a talk on his experience as a handler in 1969 at Big Sur State Park at a time that it was being overrun by “flower children and hippies”
Folsom Powerhouse Visitor Center, 1 Riley Street, Folsom

Saturday 1 – 3 p.m. –

K-9 Training Demonstration of how canines work.
Dick Edwards available for interviews.
Negro Bar, North shore of Lake Natoma off of Greenback and
Folsom Auburn Road

Saturday 6 p.m. –

Dinner program and presentations, including a slide presentation on the history of the California State Park K-9 Program
Folsom Powerhouse Visitor Center, 1 Riley Street, Folsom

WHY:

California State Parks employs 15 peace officer K-9-handler teams at any one time. The primary job of the canine partner is to provide public safety services in the state park system and to protect their handler. They also sniff out suspects, retrieve lost hikers, calm crowds and hold the attention of school children during safety presentations.

“We have fewer officer involved altercations, fewer officer injuries, fewer incidents that could require higher use of force just by the dog being there. Their mere presence takes care of a lot of problems,” said Al Chavez, canine handler coordinator. “That is the biggest reason we have the dogs.”

(more)

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The canine partners are stationed at Hearst Castle, at parks in Sacramento, at the remote South Yuba River State Park, at Pismo Beach, at Folsom Lake (vacant), in Anza Borrego Desert State Park and in parks on the coast of San Diego. Among their ranks are generalists, as well as those specialized in Search & Rescue, narcotic detection, and explosive detection.

“Everybody has a dog story in their past and it allows canine handlers to talk to visitors and get a message out that we want about the historical value of old town or the redwoods or sea otters,” said Chavez. “It gives me an opportunity to have a captive audience.”

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